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**Editor's Note:** R. Sugathan, who was sent a copy of this note, writes as follows:

In this regard I had written a letter on July 3, 1997, to the Editor, *JBNHS* saying that No. 87, rufousbellied plaintive cuckoo (*Cacomantis merulinus*) included in our bird list is an error. What was meant was *Cacomantis merulinus passerinus*.

The green munia (*Estrilda formosa*) is recorded from Thattakad in small numbers. The identification was confirmed by mist-netting the birds. For two consecutive years, we have been seeing around seven birds in our regular bird census. To clarify any doubt two of them were netted, examined and their identity confirmed. I never came across this species anywhere in my bird survey in Kerala except at Thattakad. That is why it was included in our list. It is possible that they are escapees.

The grasshopper warblers *Locustella certhiola* and *L. naevia* were caught by mist-net from Thattakad and their identity confirmed.

### 13. GANGES SOFT-SHELL TURTLE *ASPIDERETUS GANGETICUS* PREDATING ON NILGAI *BOSELAPHUS TRAGOCAMELUS* IN KEOLADEO NATIONAL PARK, BHARATPUR, RAJASTHAN

On July 1, 1999, in the afternoon, while carrying out vulture survey in the Park, we saw a nilgai *Boselaphus tragocamelus* (Family Bovidae), in the Ghana Canal of the Park. The canal had shallow water but thick muddy silt. The nilgai was finding it difficult to walk and was struggling to get out. We noticed two big soft-shell turtles *Aspideretus gangeticus* (Family Trionychidae) pulling the nilgai down whenever it tried to get up. There were turtles all over, biting off chunks of flesh from the flanks, abdomen and legs. There was blood all over as the turtles had pulled out the entrails of the antelope. The nilgai kept up the struggle for more than an hour and a half, and finally it succumbed to its injuries. The forest guards tried to chase the turtles, but in vain.

The Ganges soft-shell turtles are known to be carnivorous and are attracted to rotting flesh (Daniel 1983). They take a wide range of food from vegetable to animal matter. They have been

recorded taking waterfowl, millipedes, fish and flapshell turtles alive and scavenging on dead fish and mammals (Daniel 1983, Das 1985, Bhupathy 1990). We have not come across any reference in literature to the turtle actively predating on a live large mammal and we think it is worth recording. Probably, the nilgai was injured and the turtles were attracted to the smell of blood.

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## REFERENCES

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